

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-10 AID-05 DHA-02 /093 W

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P 201144Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1631

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY

AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMCONSUL LAHORE

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ISLAMABAD 7655

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PK, BG

SUBJECT: PAK REACTION TO BANGLADESH DEVELOPMENTS

REF: KARACHI 1776 (NOTAL)

LAHORE 961 (NOTAL)

ISLAMABAD 7504 (NOTAL)

ISLAMABAD 7545 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: ANALYSIS OF PAK REACTION TO COUP IN DACCA IS COMPLICATED AND CONFUSED BY GREAT IMPORTANCE OF THE REPORTED RENAMING OF BANGLADESH AN ISLAMIC REPUBLIC IN THE SHAPING OF OFFICIAL, PRESS, AND PUBLIC VIEWS OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF DEVELOPMENTS THERE. INITIAL PRESS AND PUBLIC REACTION TO THE COUP HERE WAS EMOTIONAL AND STRONGLY POSITIVE, WITH ENTHUSIASM FOR RETURN OF BD TO  
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MUSLIM FOLD AND APPLAUSE FOR PROMPT GOP RECOGNITION AND

SUPPORT PRINCIPAL THEMES. DIFFICULTIES BD WILL CONTINUE TO FACE, PARTICULARLY ON ECONOMIC FRONT, AND APPREHENSION ABOUT INDIAN MOVES WERE SECONDARY POINTS GENERALLY OVERSHADOWED IN GENERAL ACCLAIM. MFA RECOGNIZES THAT ENTHUSIASTIC PUBLIC RESPONSE, IF SUSTAINED, WILL CONTINUE TO BE AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN SHAPING PAKISTAN'S EVOLVING RELATIONS WITH BDG. IF REPORT OF REDESIGNATION OF BD PROVES FINALLY TO BE INCORRECT MUCH OF PUBLIC ELATION COULD QUICKLY DEFLATE AND BHUTTO'S REPUTATION DAMAGED. MFA CONTINUES TO WATCH SITUATION IN BD CAREFULLY AND REMAINS CONCERNED ABOUT INDIAN INTENTIONS. MFA OFFICIAL TELLS US THAT WITH REMOVAL OF MUJIB, VIEWED HERE AS MOST HARDLINING IN HIS GOVERNMENT ON PAK ISSUE, BDG WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY ADOPT A MORE FORTHCOMING AND FLEXIBLE APPROACH ON THE ISSUES WHICH HAVE DIVIDED THE TWO COUNTRIES. HE SAW PAKISTAN PLAYING A ROLE IN BDG EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH A COUNTERWEIGHT TO INDIAN/SOVIET INFLUENCE BUT CAUTIONED THAT GOI WOULD REMAIN OF GREAT IMPORTANCE TO BD. ABILITY TO ASSERT ITS INDEPENDENCE OF INDIAN PRESSURES WOULD DEPEND ON STRENGTH AND INNER COHESION OF ITS LEADERSHIP, SOMETHING HE SAID ONE COULD NOT YET INTELLIGENTLY SPECULATE ABOUT. END SUMMARY.

1. ANY EFFORT TO ANALYZE PAK REACTION TO THE COUP IN DACCA IS COMPLICATED AND CONFUSED BY THE GREAT IMPORTANCE OF THE REPORTED RENAMING OF BANGLADESH AN ISLAMIC REPUBLIC IN THE SHAPING OF OFFICIAL, PRESS, AND PUBLIC VIEWS OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF DEVELOPMENTS THERE. AS REPORTED EARLIER, MFA GOT ITS FIRST INKLING THAT THE REDESIGNATION REPORTS MIGHT NOT BE AUTHENTIC ONLY ON THE MORNING OF AUGUST 18, TWO AND A HALF DAYS AFTER PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO HAD ANNOUNCED GOP RECOGNITION OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH. WORD THAT THE NAME HAS APPARENTLY NOT BEEN CHANGED ONLY BEGAN TO APPEAR IN THE PRESS THIS MORNING, AND THAT IN SOMEWHAT TEMPTATIVE TERMS.

2. INITIAL PRESS AND PUBLIC REACTION TO THE COUP HERE WAS EMOTIONAL AND STRONGLY POSITIVE, AND IN SOME INSTANCES BORDER ON THE ECSTATIC. IT CONTRASTED

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SHARPLY WITH THE INCREASING INDIFFERENCE AND SMUGNESS WHICH HAD TYPIFIED PAK ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE FATE OF THE FORMER EAST WING BEFORE THE OVERTHROW. ALL NEWS-PAPERS GAVE BD DEVELOPMENTS HEAVY COVERAGE, REFLECTING ACUTE PUBLIC INTEREST IN DACCA EVENTS. ENTHUSIASTIC ACCLAIM FOR THE APPARENT RETURN OF BANGLADESH TO THE MUSLIM FOLD AND APPLAUSE FOR BHUTTO'S PROMPT INITIATIVES AS A HARBINGER OF CLOSER BD RELATIONS WITH PAKISTAN AND

THE ISLAMIC WORLD AND AS A FURTHER INDICATION OF BHUTTO'S DEMONSTRATED FLAIR FOR TIMELY FOREIGN POLICY STROKES WERE MAJOR THEMES BOTH IN THE EDITORIAL COLUMNS AND IN PRIVATE CONSERVATIONS. NEWS OF THE MURDER OF MUJIB WAS RECEIVED WITH SATISFACTION BY PRESS AND MANY PAKISTAN- IS; ONLY A FEW INTELLECTUALS SEEMED TO REGRET THE VIOLENT MANNER IN WHICH HE WAS REMOVED, BUT NOT THE RESULTS. MUJIB WAS WIDELY CHARACTERIZED AS A TRAITOR TO PAKISTAN AND ISLAM WHOSE ESTABLISHMENT OF A DICTATORSHIP WAS THE IMMEDIATE CAUSE OF HIS DOWNFALL AND WHO HAD DIED AS A TRAITOR AND DICTATOR SHOULD.

3. SOME PAPERS AND CONTACTS MENTION DIFFICULTIES WHICH NEW BDG FACES, BUT THESE CAUTIONARY NOTES HAVE BEEN RELATIVELY MINOR AMID THE GENERAL SATISFACTION WITH THE CHANGED SITUATION IN DACCA. APPREHENSIONS ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF MOVES AGAINST THE NEW REGIME BY INDIA (WIDELY AND HAPPILY CONSIDERED TO HAVE SUFFERED A MAJOR SETBACK IN THE COUP) HAVE BEEN EXPRESSED IN SEVERAL NEWSPAPERS AND ELSEWHERE, AND NEWSMEN AND OTHERS HAVE PRIVATELY MENTIONED CONCERN THAT INDIA MIGHT REACT UNPREDICTABLY. AT THE SAME TIME, THERE SEEMS WIDESPREAD FEELING THAT INDIA'S OWN INTERNAL DIFFICULTIES AND SUPPORT BENGALLEES HAVE ALREADY RECEIVED FROM ISLAMIC COUNTRIES SUCH AS SAUDI ARABIA MAY HELP WARD OFF SUCH INTERVENTION. ECONOMIC PROBLEMS CONFRONTING BD ARE ALSO CITED BUT HERE TOO THERE IS A HOPEFUL NOTE: THE RICH MUSLIM STATES WILL NOW BE PREPARED TO HELP THE RETURNED BRETHREN.

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USIA-06 IO-10 AID-05 DHA-02 /093 W

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P 201144Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1632

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY  
AMCONSUL KARACHI  
AMCONSUL LAHORE  
AMEMBASSY KABUL  
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO  
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU  
AMCONSUL HONG KONG  
USLO PEKING  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ISLAMABAD 7655

4. POLITICAL PARTIES AND LEADERS OF ALL PERSUASIONS JOINED IN HAILING BD DEVELOPMENTS AND GOP'S PROMPT REACTION TO THEM. PRESS HAS BEEN FULL OF STATEMENTS BY VARIOUS PROMINENT FIGURES WHICH ECHOED GENERAL ENTHUSIASM. JAMAAT-I-ISLAMI SPIRITUAL LEADER, MAULANA MAUDOODI, CALLED CHANGE GOD'S BLESSING AND VICTORY FOR ISLAM. CENTRAL ACTION COMMITTEE OF UNITED DEMOCRATIC FRONT ADOPTED RESOLUTION WELCOMING CHANGES IN BD. RESOLUTION STATED "HAPPY" CHANGE WOULD BRING PAKISTAN AND BD CLOSER TOGETHER, AND URGED ALL ISLAMIC COUNTRIES TO ENSURE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF BD AND PREVENT "ANY FOREIGN INTERVENTION". IT CALLED ON ISLAMIC SECRETARIAT TO CONVENE MEETING TO CONSIDER MATTER. NOT SURPRISINGLY, UDF ALSO SOUGHT TO FIND SIGNIFICANCE IN BD DEVELOPMENTS FOR PAKISTAN: RESOLUTION WARNED THAT CONTINUING "POLITICAL SUFFOCATION" IN  
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THIS COUNTRY COULD PRODUCE ADVERSE CONSEQUENCES SUCH AS THOSE IN BD.

5. MFA TELLS US THAT IT IS AWARE THAT THIS ENTHUSIASTIC PUBLIC RESPONSE, IF SUSTAINED, WILL CONTINUE TO BE AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN SHAPING PAKISTAN'S RELATIONS WITH BDG. MINISTRY IS ALSO NO DOUBT PAINFULLY CONSCIOUS, AS BHUTTO HIMSELF MUST BE, THAT IF THE ISLAMIC REDESIGNATION OF BD PROVIES FINALLY TO BE INCORRECT AND THIS BECOMES KNOWN MUCH OF THE PUBLIC ELATION MAY QUICKLY DEFLATE. THE POLITICAL IMPACT ON THE PM'S REPUTATION OF WHAT IS COMING TO APPEAR TO BE BHUTTO'S PREMATURE RECOGNITION OF A SECOND ISLAMIC REPUBLIC IN THE SUB-CONTINENT AND HIS ADVICE TO THE MUSLIM WORLD TO FOLLOW HIS LEAD HAS ALREADY BECOME A MAJOR SUBJECT OF SPECULATION AMONG THE KNOWLEDGEABLE HERE. THOUGH AT THIS EARLY STAGE NO ONE IS PREPARED TO SAY HOW SIGNIFICANT IT WILL EVENTUALLY PROVE TO BE.

6. MFA CONTINUES TO WATCH THE SITUATION CAREFULLY AND

HAS BEEN IN CLOSE CONTACT WITH US AND OTHER MISSIONS HERE TO SEEK INFORMATION. (MINISTRY HAS BEEN VERY GRATIFIED AT OUR FORTHCOMING APPROACH IN PASSING REPORTS AND TENTATIVE ASSESSMENTS.) IT REMAINS PARTICULARLY CONCERNED ABOUT INDIAN INTENTIONS AND, OF COURSE, ABOUT ISLAMIC REPUBLIC QUESTION. (IT NOW APPEARS TO HAVE CONCLUDED THAT NO NAME CHANGE HAS BEEN MADE, BUT IS PROBABLY HOPEFUL THAT SUCH A CHANGE MIGHT YET BE FORTHCOMING.)

7. IN CONVERSATION WITH POL COUSELOR AFTERNOON AUGUST 18, DIRECTOR GENERAL (SOUTH ASIA) HAYAT MEHDI EXPRESSED CAUTIOUS EXPECTATION THAT COUP WOULD LEAD TO IMPROVED RELATIONS BETWEEN PAKISTAN AND BD INCLUDING EXCHANGE OF ENVOYS. MEHDI'S VIEW WAS THAT MUJIB WAS MOST HARD-LINING OF BD LEADERS IN HIS ATTITUDE TOWARD GOP. WITH HIS DEPARTURE THE BDG WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY ADOPT A MORE FORTHCOMING AND FLEXIBLE APPROACH ON THE ISSUES WHICH HAVE DIVIDED THE TWO COUNTRIES. HE THOUGHT THAT THE NEW LEADERSHIP MIGHT WELL EASE THE LOT OF THE BIHARIS IN BD, MAKING IT POSSIBLE FOR THEM TO REGAIN CONFIDENTIAL

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THEIR LIVELIHOODS THERE AND THUS EASING PRESSURE FOR THEIR REPATRIATION. HE DID NOT SPECULATE ABOUT WHETHER THE REPATRIATION ISSUE AND THE ASSETS/LIABILITY DISPUTE WOULD HAVE TO BE SETTLED BEFORE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. OUR ASSESSMENT IS THAT THE PAKS ARE PREPARED TO MOVE AHEAD QUICKLY TO ESTABLISH RELATIONS IF THE BDG IS WILLING.

8. MEHDI THOUGHT THAT THE NEW BDG LEADERSHIP WOULD WISH TO MOVE FASTER AND FARTHER THAN HE THOUGHT MUJIB HAD TRIED TO DO TO ESTABLISH A COUNTERWEIGHT TO INDIAN/SOVIET INFLUENCE IN DACCA. HE SAW THE GOP PLAYING A ROLE IN THIS, MUCH MORE OF A ROLE THAN IT MIGHT HAVE ENJOYED WHEN MAJIB WAS IN POWER, AND THOUGHT THAT PEKING WOULD RECOGNIZE DACCA SOON. AT THE SAME TIME, HE CLEARLY RECOGNIZED THAT INDIA'S INFLUENCE WOULD REMAIN OF GREAT IMPORTANCE. HOW SUCCESSFUL THE NEW BDG WOULD BE IN ASSERTING ITS INDEPENDENCE OF THIS WOULD DEPEND ON THE STRENGTH AND INNER COHESION OF ITS LEADERSHIP, SOMETHING ONE COULD NOT YET INTELLIGENTLY SPECULATE ON. HE POINTED OUT THAT THERE WERE WAYS SHORT OF ARMED INTERVENTION THAT THE GOI COULD MAKE ITS PRESENCE FELT, AND SEEMED TO CONCLUDE THAT THESE MORE SUBTLE METHODS WERE MORE LIKELY THAN THE BLUNT ONES THE GOP HAD BEEN CONCERNED ABOUT IN THE DAYS IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE COUP.  
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